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METRO PLAN UPDATE

WILLAMETTE RIVER GREENWAY

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This is one of a series of working papers describing the Metro Area's natural assets and constraints. Please refer to Box 3 of the Metro Plan Update Process flowchart.

INTRODUCTION

The existing 1990 General Plan recognizes the Willamette River environs as being an important asset to the entire metropolitan area. The passage of the Greenway Law and Statewide Goal 15, Willamette River Greenway, lend further evidence to the importance of this natural waterway.

The purpose of this paper is to describe and outline the Willamette River Greenway in the Metropolitan Study Area. This review will focus on the Greenway as a natural asset that must continue to be protected and enhanced through the updated General Plan.

STATEWIDE PLANNING GOAL 15--WILLAMETTE RIVER GREENWAY

On December 6, 1976, the Land Conservation and Development Commission adopted Statewide Planning Goal 15, Willamette River Greenway. Goal 15 requires local jurisdictions to adopt Greenway boundaries, to specify uses permitted within those boundaries, and to indicate areas of potential public acquisition. The Goal further requires that these boundaries, uses, and potential acquisition areas be shown in local comprehensive plans. Later segments of the Metro Plan Update Work Program will include incorporation of Willamette River Greenway boundaries and potential acquisition areas in the updated plan diagram. It is anticipated that the Willamette River Greenway requirements mandated by State Goal 15 will be included as a separate plan element.

Pursuant to the requirements of Goal 15, the cities of Springfield and Eugene have received final greenway boundary approval by the Land Conservation and Development Commission for that portion of the greenway boundaries located within the city limits of the two cities. At the present time, Lane County has adopted interim greenway boundaries that will be in effect until final greenway boundary consideration is addressed during the middle or late summer of 1978.

The map which is attached to this working paper shows the final greenway boundaries for the cities of Eugene and Springfield and the interim boundaries for the unincorporated areas of Lane County located in the Metro Plan Update Study Area. For the purposes of this paper, it will be assumed that the interim boundaries for the unincorporated areas of Lane County will not be altered substantially during the final boundary review process conducted later this year.

In addition to adoption of Greenway boundaries, the three local jurisdictions have also incorporated compatibility review procedures to their

zoning ordinances when require that development proposed within the Willamette Greenway area be reviewed to insure compatibility with the Greenway statutes and Goal 15. The specific findings that must be met in order to fulfill the compatibility review requirement include the following:

1. The intensification, change of use, or development will provide the maximum possible landscaped area, open space or vegetation between the activity and the river.
2. Necessary public access will be provided to, and along, the river by appropriate legal means.

In conclusion, the two cities have fulfilled all state-mandated Greenway boundary requirements and have enacted compatibility review measures into their local zoning ordinances. The county while it does have the review measures must still seek final boundary approval later this year. It remains the duty of the Plan Update to incorporate final Greenway boundaries into the updated plan text and diagram, and to review and adopt additional policies as may be necessary to continue the protection of this valuable natural asset.

WILLAMETTE GREENWAY AS A NATURAL ASSET

As previously established, both in the existing 1990 General Plan and State Goal 15, the Willamette River Greenway represents a very important natural asset in the Eugene-Springfield community. As indicated above, all three jurisdictions have enacted compatibility review procedures to insure that any development proposed within the Greenway area does protect and enhance this natural river corridor. Since development is not prohibited within the Greenway area but must meet rigorous review requirements before being approved, it is not possible to state unequivocally that development is not desirable within the Greenway area. What is more important is the interface between the Greenway and other natural assets that are being considered during the plan update process. These include, but are not limited to, flood plains, wildlife corridors, future recreation areas, scenic areas, and sand and gravel resources.

As of the time this paper was written, only one site has been identified in the Greenway for future public acquisition. This site is shown on the attached map and is described as being the Goodpasture Island gravel ponds located north of Valley River Center between the Willamette River and Delta Highway. In this particular case, the staff would recommend that, in addition to having a high priority because of its location within the Greenway, that this area also be in the General Plan for possible public acquisition. This property, then, is not available for future residential development and will be subtracted when considering land use allocation during later phases of the Plan Update process.

ASSUMPTIONS AND FINDINGS

The assumptions and findings listed below are developed from the previous sections of this paper and some may be appropriate for inclusion in a Willamette River Greenway element in the updated plan text.

Assumption

1. The interim Greenway boundaries for unincorporated areas of Lane County within the study area will not be changed substantially during the final boundary review process.

Findings

1. The Willamette River Greenway is recognized as being an important natural asset to the entire community.
2. The boundary and compatibility review requirements of Statewide Planning Goal 15 are being complied with by the local jurisdictions.
3. While development within the Greenway can occur, subject to the compatibility review requirements of the local jurisdictions, this area represents an important natural asset in the study area, and any development that does occur within this area will require rigorous review and accommodation to the Greenway area as a natural asset.
4. The area of potential public acquisition shown on Goodpasture Island should be so designated and not considered appropriate for inclusion in the land supply for development during the later phases of the Plan Update Process.

FIGURE J 1
 METRO PLAN UPDATE
 NATURAL ASSETS AND CONSTRAINTS-
 WORKING PAPERS
WILLAMETTE RIVER GREENWAY

